

1,000 WORDS

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SECOND DRAFT  
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1 INT. OFFICE BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

IAN sits alone at a small round table, hunched over a sack lunch. He chews steadily on a lunchmeat sandwich, staring straight ahead.

A large stack of PHOTOS sits in the center of the table, in perfect order. On the floor beneath Ian's chair sits a small duffel bag.

NANCY, Ian's night shift coworker, enters through the doorway at Ian's back.

She hesitates, as though she's uncomfortable with being in the room alone with Ian. She considers leaving, maybe coming back later, but she decides to stay.

NANCY  
(politely)  
Hey, Ian. How's it going?

Ian waves in greeting without turning around, still working on his sandwich.

Nancy brushes off his impassive response. She gets a plastic container out of the fridge, cracks the lid, and places the container in the microwave.

Nancy leans against the counter, arms crossed, as Ian continues to eat his sandwich. The LOW HUM of the microwave is the only sound in the room.

Looking around, Nancy sees a newspaper on the table beside Ian. The headline reads, "SUBURBAN MURDER MYSTERY."

NANCY  
That's hard to believe, don't you think? The murder? Didn't she work here?

IAN  
Yep. Day shift.

NANCY  
(surprised)  
Oh. (pause) Did you know her?

Ian turns slowly to face Nancy.

IAN

Not well.

They share an uncomfortable silence.

NANCY

Anyway... it's just... surreal.  
Something that brutal... Things  
like that just don't happen  
around here.

Ian doesn't respond. Instead, he just stares at Nancy.

The DING of the microwave startles Nancy. Ian grins and turns back to his sandwich.

Nancy pulls her food out of the microwave and walks toward one of the empty tables. When she notices the stack of photos on Ian's table, she pauses.

Seeing an opportunity to make a friendly gesture, she walks up to the empty seat at Ian's table. As she sits down, she pulls the stack of photos toward her.

NANCY

A lot of pictures here, Ian. Are  
you an amateur photographer?

IAN

Something like that.

As Nancy flips through the photos, recognition crosses her face. She looks up into Ian's watching gaze.

NANCY

These are from the company  
barbecue, right?

Ian nods.

Nancy's eyes widen. She leans in and lowers her voice to a whisper.

NANCY (cont'd)

Was she there?

Ian nods again.

Nancy begins leafing through the photos. She pauses on a shot of a crowd of people milling around in someone's backyard. A striking YOUNG WOMAN can be seen laughing in the background.

Nancy covers her mouth with one hand.

NANCY (cont'd)

That's her.

2 EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Laughter rings in the air. It's a beautiful spring day, and small groups of coworkers huddle together over beers and burgers in a fenced-in backyard.

It's the heart of suburbia, and this is the quintessential backyard barbecue.

The YOUNG WOMAN politely excuses herself from a small group, still laughing. She makes her way to the food table to refill her plate.

On the other side of the yard, Ian snaps picture after picture of the crowd. His shots gradually focus more and more on the young woman.

3 INT. OFFICE BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Nancy continues to sift through the photos.

NANCY

You've got some pretty good shots here, Ian.

IAN

I like what I do.

Nancy stops on a close-up of the young woman.

NANCY

Wow. She was so pretty.

IAN

Yeah. Before.

Nancy looks up, a quizzical expression on her face. Ian is already up and away from the table, depositing his trash in the can near the doorway.

Nancy returns to the photos.

First a shot the woman at the buffet table, then of the woman looking around, then of the woman entering the house through the back door.

4 INT. SUBURBAN KITCHEN - DAY

The young woman enters the kitchen, setting her plate down on the kitchen table. She enters the small bathroom connected to the kitchen, closing the door behind her.

Ian enters the kitchen as soon as the bathroom door clicks shut. He looks around with a sense of calm, holding his camera close to his chest.

When the woman emerges from the bathroom, Ian snaps her picture. She reacts with disgust.

IAN

For the intranet site.

YOUNG WOMAN

Creep.

The woman leaves the kitchen without even picking up her plate of food.

Ian walks toward the kitchen window, watching the woman return to one of the small crowds. When she looks back in Ian's direction, he snaps another picture.

5 INT. OFFICE BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Nancy shifts in her seat. The photo of the young woman through the window rests atop the stack.

NANCY

You... uh... you sure have a lot of pictures of her.

Ian stands facing a pop machine, struggling to decide which soda he should purchase.

IAN

Mmmmm...

Nancy glances at the door. She considers leaving, but her curiosity draws her back to the photos.

The next one in the stack is that of the young woman getting into her car.

6 EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Dusk settles over suburbia.

The young woman waves goodbye to her coworkers as she enters her two door sedan. She starts up the car and begins driving away.

Ian, seated in his own car, snaps off one last picture before starting the engine and following the young woman.

7 INT. OFFICE BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Nancy continues flipping through photos.

The young woman's car in traffic, taken from the inside of Ian's car. The young woman exiting her car in front of her house. The young woman entering her front door.

NANCY  
(nervous)

Ian?

Ian doesn't respond. He moves from the pop machine to the snack machine, a can of Coke in his right hand. He repeats his decision ritual.

Nancy wants to stop looking at the photos. She wants to put the stack down and just walk away, but she can't.

Instead, she continues through the stack.

The next picture is one of the young woman in a dark room, mascara tears streaming down her face.

8 INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

The young woman is on the floor, terrified. She's crying as she inches backward along the floor.

A dark male figure hovers over her. In one hand, a camera. In the other, a hatchet.

YOUNG WOMAN  
Oh, please, God! Oh, no, no, no...

Nancy's pace quickens as she flips through picture after picture of the terrified woman. Tears begin to well up in her eyes.

She imagines the screams of the young woman, the crying, the pleading.

Suddenly, she stops.

The picture in her hand isn't of the woman. At least, not that she can tell.

Smears of red cover the image, as though the picture were taken through a blood-stained lense.

Nancy looks up to see Ian staring at her, an impish grin on his face. Gently, he closes the door to the break room.

Then he locks it.

Nancy lets the picture fall from her hand. She rises from the table, looking for another way out of the room as she backs away from an approaching Ian.

NANCY

Ian? I... uh, oh God. I won't say anything. Please, Ian. Just let me leave, and I won't say a word. Please...

Ian stops at the table. He cocks his head to one side and looks at his photos, reminiscing.

Slowly, Ian reaches under the table for his duffel bag. He places it on the table, unzips it, and reaches inside.

He pulls out a small hatchet, caked with blood. Nancy begins crying outright at the sight of the weapon. She can barely remain standing.

Ian gently lays the hatchet on the table and reaches back into the bag. He removes an older model 35mm SLR camera, the flash already mounted on top.

Nancy is backed against the wall. She has nowhere to go. She slides down the wall, crying and praying.

Ian grins. He raises the camera to his eye and points it at Nancy.

IAN

Smile.

THE END